

GTAS September 2009 Monthly Report

September GTAS activities included planning and development activities revolving largely around our next GTAS deployment into the Seattle area. Additionally we worked on the inclusion of toxic plume information within hand-held NOAA public safety dissemination development.

GTAS Evaluation

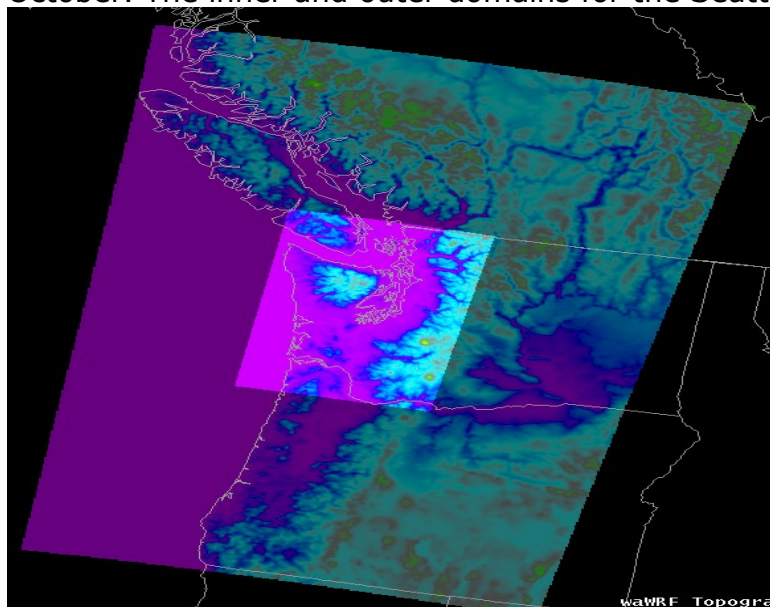
The GTAS Training Plan was finalized in September. After gathering feedback from GTAS users we completed the final version of the GTAS evaluation form needed to gather data about how useful the toxic plume and severe weather data is to WFO and EOC operations. Specific case study evaluation exercises would be used to assess the utility of the GTAS application. With that, we conducted our first exercise that included a rail car chemical spill in a rail yard located in Tarrant County. The WFO provided toxic plume and weather information to the EOC. The EOC re-ran the toxic plume model from their application and collaboratively displayed the plume on both the EOC and WFO GTAS systems. User feedback was gathered after the exercise with the GTAS online evaluation form.

GTAS HTTP-Communications

Work has started to move the GTAS application to a use HTTP communication package. This will be a great benefit for dealing with security firewalls in our future deployments.

FEMA/NOAA Seattle Deployment

We contacted Seattle area EOCs (State EOC, Seattle EOC, Other Local EOCs and the NOAA WFO) to begin installation work. This included training for the Weather Coordination Meteorologist (WCM) at the Seattle WFO, NWS Western Region Hdqtrs and the Seattle EOC. Unlike the Dallas/FT Worth EOC, the WFO works directly with the Seattle EOC who serves as a facilitator for Public Utilities, Seattle HazMat, State DOT, State EOC and other emergency services. GTAS briefings to all of the Seattle area users will take place in early October. The inner and outer domains for the Seattle deployments are shown below.



IAEM Conference

We began discussions and configuring our server/application for the IAEM Conference in Orlando.

Handheld Toxic Plume Display

NOAA has funded a project to display hazardous weather information on hand held devices. Software developers working on the project came to GSD for discussions on how we may be able to integrate toxic plume displays into their software formatting system. They got a lot of information about how the GTAS system works and we learned about the work that they're doing to display severe weather warnings on hand held PDAs. Their systems are being fielded now through NWS Western Region. We will distribute toxic plume data files from the Seattle area EOC to the developers working on this technology (see below). Note that this work was initially aimed for FEMA development in 2010 but will now it will be funded by NOAA. NOAA will develop GTAS toxic plume hand held technology along with its severe weather warning dissemination systems.





